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ED/SQ D-8/3

July 25, 1952

STEERING GROUP OF THE
ECONOMIC DEFENSE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Opening Statement by Chief of US Delegation

Attached is the statement which will be made by the chief of the U.S. Delegation at the opening of the Five Power Talks on Organizational Arrangements for Far Eastern Economic Security Measures. This is distributed to members of the Advisory Committee for their information.

Edward G. Platt, Jr.
Executive Secretary

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Welcoming Statement by Mr. Harold E. Linder, Chief of US Delegation

On behalf of the Government of the United States, I am privileged to welcome the members of this conference to Washington. I also want to express my personal hope that all of you have a pleasant and profitable stay here. I regret that we are unable to offer you more agreeable weather conditions, but this is a perennial problem for which no one has yet been able to suggest a solution. If it were possible to export the Washington climate, I can assure you that no American would propose that it be placed on a restricted list.

There is no need to stress the importance of the work this conference is undertaking. We have come to recognize that economic security measures are a vital part of the over-all efforts of free nations to protect their freedom and preserve peace. In a recent speech here in Washington, Secretary Acheson pointed out that the struggle for human liberty can never be fought on a single front. We must simultaneously build military defenses, political defenses and economic defenses.

All of the nations represented here know that international trade is a vital part of our economic lives -- in some instances, absolutely essential to economic survival. At the same time, we have all come to recognize that the tremendous sacrifices we are making in money and lives to protect our security could be largely nullified by trading policies and practices which add materially to the military strength of potential aggressors. Therefore, we have long since undertaken the difficult and delicate task of devising means whereby we can obtain the essential benefits of international trade without doing so at the risk of our security and national survival.

The fundamental task confronting this conference is to determine the best system of organization for the achievement of our economic security goals. The very fact that we are meeting here today demonstrates the global nature of the threat of aggression, and the necessity of global coordination of economic security measures. At the same time, our experience has proved that particular measures must be adopted to the particular circumstances existing in the different areas of the world and must be administered in a manner calculated to attain the most effective results in each area. As I see it, therefore, our aim must be to devise a plan which will assure optimum over-all policy coordination on a world-wide basis and at the same time permit flexibility in approaching the peculiar problems of specific areas.

In extending this welcome, I want to offer special greetings to the representatives of the Government of Japan. Their presence here has a historic significance which goes far beyond the immediate problems facing us. It represents a milestone in the development of cooperative relationships between the free peoples of Asia and the free peoples of the Western world. We are indeed privileged to sit down and discuss common problems with representatives of a nation which is not only the greatest industrial power of Asia but which has also become one of the world's great bastions of freedom and democracy. I believe these discussions will afford us a real opportunity to find answers to certain perplexing questions which are of vital concern to free people everywhere.